

Frequently Asked Questions



Refer to pages 6-8 in Your [Pregnancy and Childbirth Handbook](#) for more information

How do you determine the due date?

The average pregnancy period is 40 weeks. Your due date is calculated by using the **FIRST DAY OF YOUR LAST MENSTRUAL PERIOD**. The average menstrual cycle occurs every 28 days. Women who have irregular menstrual cycles, use birth control pills, or cannot remember their menstrual periods will have to rely on measurements such as size of uterus, fetal heart tones, and ultrasound to acquire the best due date.

Your due date is calculated by counting 280 day from your last menstrual period. To help calculate your due date:

- 1) Find the first day of your last menstrual period
- 2) Count nine months forward
- 3) Add seven days



Remember that your “due date” is only an educated guess. Do not get discouraged if your due date comes and goes and your baby still has not arrived.

Is it safe to have sex during pregnancy?

Having sex throughout pregnancy is generally permitted and will not harm your unborn baby. Having an orgasm will not hurt your unborn baby. Having sex should stop and you should seek care from your provider if the following occurs:

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| 1) abdominal or vaginal pain | 4) If you are at risk or diagnosed with preterm labor |
| 2) vaginal bleeding | 5) If you have been diagnosed with placenta previa |
| 3) “bag of water” breaks | |

Placenta previa: When the placenta implants close to or over

Which over the counter medications are safe to use during pregnancy?

Several nonprescription medications can be taken for your comfort during pregnancy. Be aware that antihistamines and decongestants do not cure your cold or sinus symptoms, but can make you more comfortable during a minor illness. Other measures like rest, increased fluid intake, air humidification may be tried instead of, or in addition to medications. During your pregnancy you may safely use the following over the counter medications, as directed by the manufacturer:

Nausea-	B6, Unisom ®, Emetrol ®
Headaches and Pain-	Tylenol ®, Datril ®
Cough-	Robitussin ® (no alcohol)
Nasal Congestion-	Sudafed ®, Saline nose spray
Constipation-	Metamucil ®, Fiber-All ®, Milk of Magnesia ®
Indigestion-	Tums ®, Rolaids ®, Maalox ®, Mylanta II ®, Riopan ®
Hemorrhoids-	Preparation H ®, Anusol ®

Talk with your provider concerning other medications.

Do cigarettes, street drugs, and alcohol hurt the baby?

You are strongly encouraged not smoke, drink, or use any recreational drugs while you are pregnant. These substances have been known to cause birth defects, low birth weight, and/or mental retardation in the newborn. This is a good time to quit if you are using these drugs. For more help and information on how to quit smoking you can contact the Preventive Medicine Office, at 912-435-5105, and ask for more information about the Ready to Quit Program.



Is it safe to drink beverages that have caffeine?

Caffeine is found in coffee, tea, soda, and chocolate. Studies have shown that excessive amounts of caffeine during the first 13 weeks of pregnancy may not be good for the pregnancy. Excessive caffeine is defined as the amount of caffeine found in three or more cups of coffee per day. Caffeine will cause you to urinate more often, which can cause you to dehydrate. Try to keep your caffeine down to 2 beverages a day or try decaffeinated drinks.

Can I still see a dentist?

It is very important that you keep up with your dental hygiene during pregnancy. Hormonal changes can cause your gums to swell and bleed more than usual. Keep up with your appointments every 6 months. Remember to inform the dentist that you are pregnant **BEFORE** any procedures are started. Dental releases can be obtained per your Healthcare Provider at any of your prenatal appointments.



Do I need to be extra careful if I have cats?

Due to a parasite found in cat feces, called toxoplasmosis, you should have **someone else clean your litter box**. Toxoplasmosis can negatively impact a pregnancy. Always wash your hands after handling a cat.

Is it safe to travel?

If you are scheduled to take an extended trip, consult with your provider. If you are driving, make frequent stops to walk around and increase circulation. Drink plenty of fluids. If you are flying, you may need to check with the airlines as to their policies. Always take a copy of your medical records with you when you travel. Travel after 34 weeks is not recommended. If travel is necessary, please discuss your plans with your Healthcare Provider.

